DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 274 657 SP 028 146

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TITLE A Preliminary Model of Pre-Service Teacher Education as the Preparation of Professional Artists.
PUB DATE [86]
NOTE 28p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Aesthetic Values; *Creative Teaching; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Improvement Programs; *Preservice Teacher Education; Psychological Needs; Self Actualization; *Teaching Styles; Value Judgment

ABSTRACT

A model is presented for preparing teachers as "artists of the classroom" in centers referred to as "institutes of the teaching arts." In the model, the development of four fundamental qualities in all preservice students of the teaching arts are stressed: (1) a pridefully creative outlook on the work of teaching; (2) an understanding of the social, historical, philosophical, and psychological foundations of education undergirding artistically creative endeavor in learning environments; (3) a sophisticated working knowledge of the technology of the craft of teaching; and (4) a personal style of artistic performance in the classroom. Each of these qualities to be developed and honed is discussed in light of a suggested sequential program of professional preparation fluidly combining study of educational theory and technology with clinical and practicum applications. Some novel yet highly practicable strategies for preparing pedagogical artists are presented. Such strategies are consistent with recent theoretical and empirical work on teacher education from alternative perspectives as well as with the original conceptual model proposed. (JD)

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A Preliminary Model of Pre-Service Teacher Education as the Preparation of Professional Artists

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A Preliminary Model of Pre-Service
Teacher Education as the Preparation
of Professional Artists

In this paper I argue that teaching is an art; accordingly, men and women who teach in schools should be prepared professionally in institutes of the teaching arts with programs substantially different from those currently offered in departments of teacher education. The position taken herein represents an important advance in my thinking about the preparation of teachers, as well as, hopefully, what thoughtful teacher educators may expect from their efforts to promote genuine educational excellence.[1]

There is nothing revolutionary about saying that teaching is an art. From time immemorial, educators, scholars, and the general public have referred to "the art of teaching." But, although a few scholars and researchers have studied the characteristics that make teaching a genuine art form, by far most of those who speak of the art of teaching do so offhandedly and ritualistically, in the same way that people speak of teaching as a profession. The commonplace references to teaching as an art or a profession are merely linguistic conventions which have evolved over the years for ideological and pragmatic reasons--that is, to influence others or develop rapport with them, as well as simply because custom dictates such linguistic usage.

In this paper I will not be discussing the art of teaching as conventionally understood in colloquial usage, but rather in its literal sense. I argue that authentic teaching, **in its very essence**, is a genuine art form with all that such a conceptualization connotes for the work of teachers in schools. Given that presupposition, it follows that the way in which teachers are trained

should be altered accordingly. Artists of the classroom ought to be prepared according to principles widely employed in training other kinds of artists. In so doing, we may harness the intrinsic artistry of teaching in America. To think of teaching and teacher education in this way **is** revolutionary, albeit not utopian.

The position taken above presumes, contrary to what most Americans believe, that formal education is **not** a utilitarian enterprise as is the postal service or the telephone company. Education, at its best, is an **aesthetic offering** which may or may not be accepted by its intended recipients. And, at its best, this offering is in the nature of a "gift of the gods," or, in the words of Victor Kobayashi, "an act of grace."[2]

If, as asserted, schooling has highly limited, nonutilitarian functions to perform at best, then it is transparently in the interests of the American people to look elsewhere for individual and collective salvations,[3] and begin concentrating on the limited services schools **can** perform effectively. In turn, those services are almost entirely dependent upon the individuals who work directly with students in the trenches. Teachers do best what all creative artists strive to do--organize their personal resources of talent and technical skill in the individual pursuit of a vision of perfectibility which **they**--not some external power groups--hold in their mind's eye. In the case of the painter, the pursuit takes place on canvas using selected brushes and mixtures of oil; in that of the teacher, it takes place in the classroom using books and perhaps more recent technology, language, and complex blendings of human (interpersonal and intergroup) interaction.

Teaching viewed as Art

Elsewhere I have defined art broadly as the **highly personalized struggle**

to commune with the universe by creating and preserving the truth.[4] Thus, it is spiritual at the core. Nowhere have I seen this idea articulated so lucidly as in psychiatrist Victor Frankl's description of a former patient's struggle, while in his care, to find authentic meaning in her life as a professional painter with a deeply religious urge. Until she was able to reconcile her professional strivings with her spiritual values, she was mediocre in both her career and in the rest of her life.[5] Frankl believes that everyone must endure such a struggle to, in my words, "commune with the universe;" but noone can afford less to than the artist, whether painter, dancer, composer, or schoolteacher. Nonetheless, it bears noting that all artistic struggle has a broader, more mundane social function; i.e., to **civilize**, to **humanize**, and, thereby, to help **change society** for the better progressively. Judged in those terms, teaching, always an individual act of will and grace in its essence, is a major art form and the authentic teacher a creative power; as such, the teacher is an agent of morally worthwhile social change.[6]

Ignacio Götz has argued in quite beautiful language that teaching viewed as art--i.e., the personalized struggle to create and preserve the truth--is "metaphor for what is essentially indescribable."[7] He goes on to say:

> ....The metaphor of art allows us to speak of teaching as it appears, as it unconceals itself, but also as it remains hidden and mysterious in its fundamental being... The truth of teaching appears only in artistic teaching. Man teaches artistically just as man dwells poetically on this earth.[8]

Like all genuine artistry, this indescribable effort at its best is awesome, Götz feels:

> The unconcealedness of truth which takes place in the classroom takes place not automatically but through the process of teaching....
>
> No wonder that teaching, when it has been true to its essential calling, has been a matter of marvel and respect. For it is, of course, something to ponder with awe that truth should come to be as the result of one's

> endeavors, that unconcealedness should come to be in teaching. Such is the marvelous truth of teaching that emerges when it is seen as art....[9]

Thus, conceived symbolically as paradox and mystery in the manner of Götz with whom I concur, teaching is at bottom a creative art--something vastly greater than the mundanely sociological view of it as a middle-level skilled craft or even as professional endeavor.

Harry Dawe seems to concur with Götz' notion of teaching as highly subjective endeavor embodying paradox and mystery when, in a recent article, he spoke of teaching as a performing art in which "the **person** of the teacher is the essential ingredient in that mysterious interaction called teaching."[10]

Numerous other scholars may be cited who have grappled with this matter of teaching as art from a variety of theoretical perspectives, including the seminal John Dewey. In Dewey's otherwise well known experiential perspective, practically **any** activity that human beings engage themselves in wholeheartedly and with intelligence for ends that they have personally determined as being worthy can be an artistic activity:

> Art is a **quality** of doing and of what is done... The work takes place when a human being cooperates with the product so that the outcome is an experience that is enjoyed because of its liberating and ordered properties....[11] (Emphasis added)

To Dewey, all such **aesthetic** undertakings have equal rank. He is contemptuous of the elitism and snobbery that sets so-called "fine art" apart from "practical activity" (including aspects of teaching). In his inimitable language:

> ....All rankings of higher and lower are, ultimately, out of place and stupid. Each medium has its own efficacy and value. What we can say is that the products of the technological arts become fine in the degree in which they carry over into themselves something of the spontaneity of the automatic arts....[12]

Dewey leaves no question as to where he stands on whether and to what extent teaching itself is an art form. It **can** be, if its essence can be actualized by "humanizing" the classroom:

> It is by way of communication that art becomes the incomparable organ of instruction, but the way is so remote from that usually associated with the idea of education, it is a way that lifts art so far above what we are accustomed to think of as instruction, that we are repelled by any suggestion of teaching and learning in connection with art. But, our revolt is in fact a reflection upon education that proceeds by methods so literal as to exclude the imagination and one not touching the desires and emotions of men....[13]

Envision a pre-collegiate school education in the United States that prizes the imagination of the teacher and whose principal goals include touching the desires and emotions, as well as intellects, of boys and girls. Curriculum theorist Elliot Eisner, in his superb book The Educational Imagination, does just that:

> ....What we are seeing when we see artists work--on the stage, in the studio, in the concert hall, and in a **classroom**--is not the absence of rationality and intelligence, but the ultimate manifestation of its realization.
>
> Such individuals work with the qualities of speech and gesture, the musician with those of sound, the painter with color, line, and form, and the teacher with words, timing, and the creation of educational environments. What all of these artists have in common is the aspiration to confer a unique, **personal** order on the materials with which they work. And most work in contexts that are in a state of continual flux. No recipe will do. No routine will be adequate, even if routines must be acquired as a part of one's repertoire. The point is that much of what we know and the basis for much of our action rest on **inexpressible** forms of consciousness that recognize the **feel** of things and serve the qualities that lead to closure and consummation. When we see such abilities displayed in public, whether on the stage or in the classroom, we should give them their due. The achievement of art is not, after all, a menial accomplishment.[14] (Emphases added)

In more prosaic but equally effective language, Gilbert Highet echoes the sentiments of Dewey and Eisner in his famous book The Art of Teaching:

> ....Teaching is not like inducing a chemical reaction; it is much more like painting a picture or making a piece of music, or on a lower level like planting a garden or writing a friendly letter. You must throw your heart

into it, you must realize that it cannot all be done by formulas, or you will spoil your work, and your pupils, and yourself.[15]

Finally, to round out the common thread of thought in certain of the important writings on the art of authentic teaching, let us borrow a few sentences from Maxine Greene's existential effort Teacher As Stranger:

> There are no final answers, nor are there directions to govern every teaching situation. If he is to be effective, the teacher cannot function automatically or according to a set of predetermined rules. Teaching is purposeful action. It must be carried on deliberately in situations never twice the same....[16]

I might continue quoting passages from the writings of leading thinkers who, from a variety of ontological perspectives, have pondered the question of whether teaching is an art form.[17] But, I think the point has been made. In its truest and most profound sense it is, indeed, a distinctive art. As such, it embodies paradox, mystery, authentic personhood, and, yes, the skillful utilization of self-selected educational technology in the purposeful service of this personhood. In short, it **is**, I maintain, one distinctive form of personal struggle for communion with the universe.

Philosophically, the position propounded may be outlined in the following paradigm:

1. It is grounded in a metaphysical outlook that views human life as extraordinarily complex in its institutional organization and dynamics; and, accordingly, considers utilitarian schooling efficacy as highly limited--especially in the short term.[18]

2. As an integral part of that complex reality performing a set of societally assigned institutional roles, every individual teacher is, nonetheless, unique and possesses personal educational values and beliefs, as well as preferred ways of expressing them imaginatively in the classroom.

3. Epistemologically, every teacher has his own underlying conception of truth, knowledge, and how to convey truth and knowledge to learners; these may be clearly "understood" by the teacher or, as is usually the case, remain at an "intuitive" level.
4. No one epistemology has yet been proven the "best" one; therefore, each teacher should and, to be most personally effective in her work, must decide for herself what truth is and how to convey truth to her students.
5. Axiologically, each teacher has her internalized conception of moral duty as an educator--to pupils, parents, the community and society. This despite educational laws and formal policies that (increasingly) seek to inhibit independent ethical judgment and interpretation of cultural norms by teachers.
6. If given the opportunity and the "permission" (by their "society," their "superiors," their therapist, or their god) to teach authentically, most teachers will choose to be highly creative stylistically in the classroom, seeking aesthetic order thereby in light of their preferred metaphysical and epistemological beliefs as the ultimate aim of their creative efforts. (It needs to be added that such a goal is consonant with that ranked most highly on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs to be met in the struggle for individual self-actualization.[19] Indeed, if Frankl is correct in his belief that true self-actualization is always a **side-effect** of authentic struggle for personal meaning via "de-involvement" with the self and the "losing of one's self" in a responsibly selected greater life task, or mission,[20] then it follows that teaching artistically may be one of the all but forgotten principal ways of living a self-actualizing life --by losing oneself in personally fulfilling work for the benefit

of others. What other medium, after all, demands so much of the artist's attentiveness to forces outside of himself than does the classroom with its educationally hungry children?)

A Model for Preparing Professional Classroom Artists

The pre-service professional training of those who wish to become artists of the classroom should be governed by a conceptual model which stresses the development of four fundamental qualities:

1. a pridefully creative outlook on the work of teaching by all novitiates, buttressed by
2. a thoroughgoing understanding of the social, historical, philosophical and psychological foundations of education undergirding artistically creative endeavor in learning environments
3. a sophisticated working knowledge of the technology of the craft of teaching; i.e., a reservoir of high level technical skills to call upon as needed and desired in the professional teacher's day-to-day efforts to create "works of learning art" with students, and, most importantly,
4. a **personal style** of artistic performance in the classroom which non-judgmentally sets off one authentic teacher from another, but which also--even more than skill--denotes the fruition of basic teaching talent, or "giftedness" for this particular art form.

At this point, it bears noting, interestingly, that the aforementioned qualities to be developed in prospective teaching artists are consistent with "occupational socialization needs" discussed in previously published research by the author considering teacher training from the more "scientific" organizing perspective of social psychological role theory.[21] In that context, development of a "pridefully creative outlook," for example, is roughly comparable to my

earlier notion of a desire by the new teacher for "**belongingness**" in an occupational group; "foundational understanding" is associated with the novice teacher's finding a unique "**role position**" in the occupational group; securing a "working knowledge of the technology of the craft" synchronizes closely with the "**role rehearsal**" process leading to positive self-regard as a professional performer; and "personal performing style" correlates with "**confirmation of a highly unique role identity**" as the prospective teacher becomes close to ending his formal training and finding a job.

In the remainder of the paper I shall outline what I envision as a "proper" preparation of artists of the classroom, in terms of the four elements noted above.

Before proceeding, however, let me emphasize that the preparation of professional teaching artists is conceived herein as taking place in what I like to call "institutes of the teaching arts" rather than in departments or programs of teacher education, curriculum and instruction, etc. as at present. No value judgment concerning the affiliation of such teaching art institutes in relation to the larger university complex is intended. Just as institutes of the graphic, plastic, musical, and other arts may be autonomous or integral components of comprehensive colleges and universities, there is no evidence at this time to indicate the superiority of either the independent or interdependent organizational structure of institutes of professional preparation in the teaching arts. What **is** imperative, in any case, is the ready availability of qualified and dedicated faculty including both professional educators and scholars in other university disciplines, libraries and books, lecture halls and classrooms, modern educational technology, nearby demonstration schools and schools for clinical training, advanced student teaching and internships, and an overall professional development climate which fosters experimentation and the search for excellence.

A second point related to the matter of autonomy: whether the professional program of my proposed institute of the teaching arts ought to be offered during the undergraduate years or as a separate graduate credential or degree program is not at issue herein; again, I see no convincing empirical evidence to support either position in this current controversy.

However, for heuristic reasons, in this paper I will treat the notion of an institute for the teaching arts in its own right as a **discrete** professional preparation operation of approximately two years duration for most students attending. I will concentrate in what follows on **its** unique program of pre-service studies in teaching, and assume that the students enrolled in the institute have had or are currently having their General Education and other pre-professional academic requirements adequately met elsewhere, regardless of their scholastic rank.

-Developing a Pridefully Creative Outlook:

Artists take great pride in their work. They esteem themselves highly as they struggle to make a more or less originally significant contribution to civilization by virtue of their well developed and refined talent. This pride is sufficient to sustain the majority of them even when the larger society denigrates their creative efforts, as it not infrequently does. Artists "know" the value of their efforts whether the latter are marketable or scorned by the fickle public. Artists see their work as a special **calling** which has its own intrinsic rewards regardless of the monetary value placed on it or the fame accorded them by the public and by their peers.

This pride is partly inculcated during their formal training and partly a result of the happy myth of innate giftedness, their almost "magical" ability to produce original statements--attributed artists by "ordinary people."

Teachers are not commonly perceived of as having magical gifts, as other artists are. For one thing, there are "too many" of them, and they are highly

visible to everyone as they work; i.e., they have no mystique. For another, **what** the teacher creates is an intangible product; hence, not aesthetically judgeable. Only the **process** of teaching may be evaluated by aesthetic criteria (or, for that matter, any other criteria of relevance--despite what accountability buffs may erroneously believe), whereas for all other arts the product is what counts in the last analysis. (As everyone knows, the most gifted of college teachers almost never receive their proper due as **teachers**, only as published scholars.) Most teachers, then, cannot, unaided, be expected to rise above the culturally induced illusion that "anyone can be a teacher." Therefore, far more than other artists, prospective teachers need to be told that they have something significant, difficult, and unimitational to offer civilization by their mentors while in professional training. They cannot depend upon the larger mystique about creativity that other artists enjoy to develop a pridefully creative outlook on their work, or what Louis Rubin, in his excellent book Artistry In Teaching, calls "hunger":

> The roots of great teaching lie in attitude, ideology, dedication, and passion. Raw talent is not enough. Many who have the potential for artistry fall short of the mark. The problem is not the lack of ability but rather the absence of professional 'hunger.' Those who seek a simple path to excellence are disappointed because--although we can show them gadgetry, tricks, razzle-dazzle devices, and clever maneuvers--all of these are the symbols, not the source, of artistry. The real genesis...is an abiding personal devotion to the art of teaching. Without such devotion, ordinary teachers may use skillful, artistic procedures, but the end result is not authentic artistry. Hence, formula and rule have but limited utility.[22]

Teacher educators must once again start communicating to their students what a noble and difficult calling the fostering of learning at any age is, in part by actually telling them and in larger part by modeling artistry in their own teaching. To do so believably, teacher educators must themselves believe that teaching is an important art form to which they are "hungrily"

devoted. There is a move afoot--a serious one led by the two major teacher unions and some nationally prominent educational administrators alike--to make teaching a genuine profession, comparable to law and medicine. Teacher educators have a chance to capture the moment by supporting this movement, but in terms of inculcating a unique type of professional attitude in prospective teachers, namely that teachers are professional **artists** whose medium happens to be the classroom.

No longer should teacher education programs accept any warm body that walks in off the street, as most do at present. Instead, only the best and the brightest of the college population should be admitted to institutes of the teaching arts and in discrete classes at the beginning of each academic year. That is not an elitist statement nor is it impractical, as some might erroneously conclude. If it is **artists** of the classroom we wish to develop in teacher education programs, what must be done will be done to recruit talented students, exaggerated cultural platitudes about "equality" and hortatory arguments about teacher undersupply notwithstanding.

And, once admitted--at all times from the first day forth--the faculty ought to unashamedly strive to inspire their students to conceive of their chosen career as a special calling worthy of the fullfledged and long term commitment of the most talented and dedicated young people. A far cry from today's teacher education climate in which the faculty typically view themselves and their students alike as the bottom of the academic barrel! Teacher educators in America must cease being servile to their pompous detractors in academe and elsewhere; they must rise up and courageously announce to each other and to their students that teaching is a great art form, to be entered into and engaged in with passion and pride by gifted men and women driven to "unconceal" the truth to boys and girls.

-Study of the Foundations of Education and Teaching

The artist teacher-to-be needs to study comparative philosophies of education (schools of educational aesthetics, if you prefer) and their curricular and instructional implications, with the aim of selecting one or of developing what my senior colleague Morris Bigge has called an "emergent synthesis"[23] of several. In addition, the teacher needs a realistic understanding of what is pedagogically possible within that philosophical superstructure in light of the character of the society within which he will practice his art. In this regard, it should be observed that far less is permissible for teachers in practice in the United States in comparison with that allowed practitioners of other arts less circumscribed by ideological pressures, trends, and organizational constraints. Teaching, frankly, is one of the more role-circumscribed of the various art forms, and will continue to be so even should schooling become perceived of less as a directly efficacious public utility in the future and more as a joyous experience which brings its own intrinsic rewards, with no guarantees of intended results. Thus, the philosophical and social foundations of education are both essential in the preparation of teachers who will be **relatively** free artists of the classroom.

Some knowledge of the history of one's chosen field of creative endeavor and its greatest figures is also enriching and a source of additional pride in one's craft. The would-be painter should experience the work of Van Gogh, Picasso, O'Keefe; the would-be teacher that of Socrates, Quintilian, Pestalozzi, Montessori. Also of value to the prospective teacher is a grounding in the currently available principles of human development and learning; i.e., the psychological foundations of education. Of course, much of what purports to be "scientific psychology" is actually philosophy in disguise; hence, philosophy of education and educational psychology are, even more so than philosophy and educational sociology, best studied together. Certainly, in studying comparative

theories of learning, for example, the student should be made aware that one chooses a preferred model because it appears to fit one's epistemological (as well as metaphysical and axiological) assumptions; e.g., psychological "humanism" is in many respects subsumed within existential philosophy, "behaviorism" within scientific realism, and "cognitive-field" theory within instrumentalism/ experimentalism.

So, a thorough grounding in educational philosophy, educational sociology, and educational psychology, as well as some backround in educational history will provide the artist teacher-to-be the necessary, albeit not sufficient empirical-conceptual foundation for high level professional endeavor of a creative nature in the future. If, for some inexplicable reason, the choice must be made to provide only one of the above foundational studies in the program of the institute of teaching arts, then in that case I would recommend philosophy. For all genuine artistic expression--"miraculously intuitive" in conception--is grounded ultimately in a coherent vision of the true, the good, and the beautiful. These, in turn, cannot be divorced from a personalized assessment of the real, which is fostered in the study of metaphysics and ontology.

The socio-psychological and philosophical foundations of education, then, are an indispensable component of the proper preparation of the artist teacher, although they have been badly treated in recent years in programs of teacher education designed to train functionaries of the classroom, mere classroom technicians.

-Obtaining a Working Knowledge of Teaching Technology

Just as the painter needs to be able skillfully to mix his watercolors or oils and to draw various forms such as the human body or flowers or mountains (even if later he will create abstractions exclusively), as the future

ceramicist must be capable of skillfully using the potter's wheel, and the cellist to competently hold and draw his bow with his right hand while producing different notes on the finger board with his left, so the artist teacher needs to possess certain technical skills in order to teach. Notwithstanding the current contempt for them displayed by detractors of professional teacher education, the teacher does need "how to," or "methods" training; talent and "feeling" for the art are not enough.

My own position is that it is the primary function of preparation in the social, philosophical, and psychological foundations components of teacher preparation to help the future teacher begin thinking seriously about selecting an overarching conceptual model to generally guide and direct his creative efforts in the future. Thus, some artist teachers will prefer "realistic" art, others "existential" art, still others "instrumentalist" art, etc. But, it is not sufficient to **prefer** a particular school of art; one must be able to skillfully apply in practice that preference--i.e., be technically proficient in teaching "realistically," "existentially," or "instrumentally" under the actual conditions of classroom life in contemporary society. Some preliminary thoughts along those lines are in order.

First, it is presumed that the teacher of whatever level (elementary, middle school, senior high, etc.) knows her subject. Given this presupposition, I propose that an **analytically** discrete course or set of related courses be required of all students attending the institute of teaching arts regardless of their curricular specialty. It should be called, simply, "Teaching" or "Pedagogy." This course (or courses) should deal substantively with all the known principles, approaches, strategies, methods for working with students advocated by proponents of the different philosophies examined and by scholars engaged in research on learning. That is, it should consider the lecture method, small group dis-

cussion leadership, direction of pupil research, leading whole class discussion, Socratic dialogics, coaching and tutoring, demonstration, and so forth. It should also consider various strategies of motivation, discipline, classroom management, and student evaluation essential to basic survival in any classroom and to effective instruction.[24]

Armed with a substantive knowledge of the known range of "methods" of teaching, the student--regardless of personal subject, or curricular interest--then must try them all out in practice in beginning and intermediate level clinical settings at the art institute itself where small group simulation work takes place and with live pupils in nearby public or private schools willing to cooperate with the institute. Limiting his attention to work with live pupils, Harry Dawe, cited earlier, thinks of the novice artist as learning to perform skillfully in a "teaching studio" replete with one-way mirrors for observers to study teaching performances of peers and mentors.[25] Dawe's is an intriguing prospect for the professional development of teaching artists. Like most other artists they might profit handsomely from their time spent in the teaching studio.

The main point, however, is that the student must become skillful in the application of scientific/technical aspects of teaching performance just as the painter must become skillful in mixing colors and drawing the human body. The student must first develop a modicum of behavioral proficiency in all the various techniques of teaching applicable to an extensive range of curricular alternatives, regardless of her philosophical preference, before being permitted to move ahead into more advanced practice teaching. Whether simulated or with live pupils and other significant reference figures, this is a matter of what social psychologists might term "anticipatory role rehearsal."

Where does basic study of classroom technology and early clinical application of the scientific/technical principles of teaching leave off and advanced

practice teaching enter the picture? When the student preparing to be an artist has been judged to have acquired rudimentary proficiency, or "competence" in applying the science and technology of the **craft** of teaching in carefully-monitored clinical settings. Once fundamental technical proficiency in the various elements of the craft aspects of teaching have been acquired, the professional preparation of teachers enters into its singly most significant phase, that in which craftsmanship is finely honed and the essence of creative endeavor, personal **style**, is encouraged and fostered in the budding teaching artist.

-Developing an Authentic Teaching Style

Rubin Sees teaching style as "a special way of doing things, a manner...that makes the teacher what he or she is. Style is a composite of the teacher's demeanor and conduct, apparent in the things teachers emphasize, in the procedures they use, and in their reactions to opportunity, adversity, failure, and success. It is reflected in both good teaching and bad, because each practitioner goes at his or her work differently."[26]

Only a model of teaching as a genuine art form permits thinking to transcend the nomothetic limitations of occupational role and role socialization to the extent necessary to move teaching clearly into the **idiographic** mode where alone authentically personal style may be encouraged. From this idiographic perspective, there is no such thing as a "right" or a "wrong" style of teaching, although, admittedly, some artist teachers employ a style that is more "marketable" than others. Each of us, if we are willing to make the daring leap beyond the safety of our roles, is then capable of developing our own personal style of teaching that is the classroom equivalent of the special style of every painter, sculptor, composer, or novelist worthy of the appellation "artist." We then have a right to be ourselves; in fact, until we do, we fail to achieve the best that is

in us as teachers, and our pupils learn less than they would have otherwise had we not been conforming craft technicians or even relatively autonomous professionals, instead of courageously individualistic artists with our equally worthy idiosyncratic styles of performing.

To speak personally for a moment: It has long been an important part of my basic **style** to engage in what I might call "stimulating" dialogues with my students. This has been true of all my classes at every level of the formal educational structure ranging from first grade through graduate school. Try as I might, I have never been able to teach in any other way. I have been terminated from more than one public school teaching position, because of my inability to "contain" myself in this regard and to repress my students' "exuberance." As one suspects, then, lurking in the back of my mind for many years was the nagging suspicion that, somehow, it is "wrong" to teach in the idiosyncratic manner that I am most comfortable with. "Good" teachers are calm and dispassionate, so I had been informed over and over again by the research literature, by "experts" on pedagogy, by school administrators, and by some of the parents of my students. Only after finally accepting the fact that **I** can not teach effectively in any other way than by engaging, confronting, challenging my students to, at times, the very core of their being, regardless of age, gender, "sociocultural differences " and IQ, "attention span," "need for structure," and all the other factors that teachers are taught to take into cautious consideration in their daily work with youngsters--that it is **my** style to interact dialogically with my students for better or worse--only then was I at last freed of an enormous existential burden. I then realized that, for me at least, it was and is a total waste of whatever limited talents I might possess to ape the style of other, less provocative teachers that I have known or heard about, regardless of how "popular" they might be or how effective in facilitating learning. **I must be who I am** in the classroom, as in the rest of my life. And, so must each and every one

of my students who are preparing to teach, if they are to achieve a modicum of true success with their own students and grow professionally as artists of their own classrooms. In short, "to thine own self be true." Once adjudged basically competent by her mentors and peers, every would-be artist of teaching must go her own way stylistically even if to do so means to suffer at the hands of powerful others who might happen to disagree with her way of doing teaching. Victor Frankl said that every human being must ultimately face three tragic realities of finite life: I have failed; I am suffering; I will die.[27] Teachers who are artists are no exception. Art is, ultimately, personal style expressed valiantly.

So, after a strong humanistic and behavioral foundation for teaching has been acquired by the prospective teacher, as well as a working knowledge of the craft aspects of pedagogical performance, the student, in my model, is expected to go the next step beyond ordinary competence in the classroom into genuine artistry which entails the development of a compatible personal style.

At this most advanced stage of pre-professional training, the prospective teacher is expected to work in elementary or secondary classrooms as a fullfledged "student teacher." In this advanced "rehearsal" stage, the student teacher is expected to demonstrate successful pedagogical application of a freely selected philosophy of education leading eventually to a style of teaching which is highly personalized; therefore, artistically authentic. In sum, the pre-service training at this most vital last stage consists of synthesizing everything learned previously and finding a unique **self** as an artist. Proficiency is assumed at the outset of this stage; the great challenge henceforth is that of stylistically implementing a pedagogical philosophy of the student's own choosing.

The implementation of pedagogical philosophy with the rudiments of personal artistic style go hand-in-hand as the advanced student teacher works with

youngsters in the classroom. In time, hopefully, both become second nature to the student teacher; but not without consistent feedback from master teacher and visiting supervisor from the teaching arts institute following performance rehearsals.

In this final stage of pre-service preparation, the student teacher experiments pedagogically; and, like all other budding artists, is **critiqued** on his performances by his mentors, as well as by other advanced student teachers. The master teacher and institute supervisor critique the student teacher in the classroom directly after they observe performances, while the student teacher's peers critique him at a distance--during weekly or bimonthly meetings held on campus of all student teachers led by their institute supervisor aided, where feasible, by master teacher(s).

Performance critiques may initially be fairly informal and easygoing--perhaps a brief positive statement to assuage any trepidation on the part of the newly-placed student teacher. Such oral feedback may then be followed by writeups which grow increasingly incisive as the student teacher's skin thickens with experience so that she can accommodate and assimilate candid feedback without undue anxiety, defensiveness, and personality fragmentation.

At the same time, the institute supervisor is utilizing the latest electronic technology to **videotape** a variety of teaching episodes for subsequent playback to the budding artist teacher. The modern battery-operated camcorder is regularly brought into the student teacher's classroom, and sequences of various experimental teaching performances are unobtrusively recorded, some lasting as little as two or three minutes, others up to twenty or thirty minutes or longer. Added to the oral and written critiques provided the student teacher, the videotaped samples of her practicum performances enable the novice to see and hear directly and without evasion what she apparently did well or poorly with her students,

and the extent to which elements of personal style are gradually being incorporated into her teaching.

Ordinarily, these videotaped samples are discussed by the student teacher and the supervisor privately in the latter's office using a small television monitor. Having observed himself in actual work with youngsters in this way, the student teacher returns to the practicum site to correct technical pedagogical errors, if any, and to struggle to achieve stylistic refinements. As my wife, a painter, informs me, the process described above is comparable to that involved in the training of visual artists as they struggle to create increasingly effective "performances pieces."

This use of videotapes as a major source of helpful performance critique of the developing artist is further amplified at the weekly or bimonthly meetings of supervisor, master teacher(s), and other student teaching peers. At such meetings, pre-selected videotaped performance samples are shown to one and all, and are evaluated publicly--not only by supervisor and master teacher, but by peers as well. Lest readers worry about such a public assessment being "cruel," I hasten to remind them that I am concerned herein with preparing high quality professional artists, not mere amateurs nor salaried technicians of a teaching craft. The old adage, "if you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen," applies in this regard. If painters, sculptors, dancers, and musicians undergoing professional training can learn to tolerate the sometimes painfully honest criticisms of their mentors and peers in public, so can prospective teaching artists. Indeed, experience informs me that the real concern should be not with "cruelty" in peer assessment, but rather with securing sufficient candidness to benefit each other as future professional artists.

When well handled by the practicum supervisor, such regular meetings to discuss videotaped performances of peers and try out suggestions for improvement

via simulation techniques can be an immensely valuable tool for helping advanced student teachers to steadily grow professionally. They are mandatory components of the training requirements of all the other arts.

The final stage of pre-service training of artist teachers ends when the supervisor, master teacher(s), and student teacher agree that the latter is ready to try her hand at operating her own classroom, normally following a year or so of fulltime student teaching. Some may require a longer practice teaching period to fully prepare for the "real world of the classroom." I am not one who believes that artists should necessarily undergo formal training of extremely lengthy duration. In saying that, I am aware that it is becoming increasingly fashionable for painters and writers, for instance, to secure graduate degrees before they begin their careers, and that there is talk of "career teachers" being required to secure advanced degrees in education before being permitted to practice. Notwithstanding such trends, it remains my view that a two year professional preparation program at an institute for the teaching arts following three or four years of liberal education in a university is normally ample to accomplish the objectives herein espoused to launch the prospective teacher on her artistic career. The approximately two year program envisioned includes one year of intensive advanced student teaching as discussed in the present section. A followup internship year, which I would advocate, represents an extra, or "bonus" year during which beginning teachers focus on further refining their personal artistic styles largely on their own.

I believe that the carefully supervised one year of advanced practice teaching is sufficient for most teachers to refine their philosophically-based pedagogical skills and begin to formulate a personally compatible performing style which will be effective for them in subsequent practice. More than one year might "spoil" many potentially creative teachers just as "too much" graduate school spoils many potentially creative scholars and intellectuals. Thus, I

would rather risk under-practice of the type suggested than over-practice which suffocates the novice in excessive self-consciousness as a result of constant supervisorial assessment. I would prefer to provide the novice deep, thorough, consistent feedback up to a point. After that mutually-agreed upon point has been reached, let the by-now reasonably confident new teacher or intern alone on his own for awhile to further refine his art by himself; but, see to it that mentors continue to be available to provide advice and help when and only when specifically called upon for assistance. Later on, after having established his credentials as a fullfledged artist of the classroom, the practicing professional may, if desired, return to school or take in-service workshops to polish skills and add new information to his repertoire of professional knowledge. In fact, one hopes that the artist of the classroom always hungers for more and more creative growth. After all, art demands lifelong personal struggle and growth--it's the price one pays for the privilege of being an artist.

Conclusion

In this paper I have presented an hypothesized model for the pre-service professional preparation of a new breed of teacher, the artist of the classroom. Implicit in my overall argument is a growing conviction, discussed elsewhere,[28] that teaching in the United States is **not** "too important to be an art," as most Americans--with their single-minded faith in the utilitarian social efficacy of schooling--appear to believe.

I have no illusions, of course, that anything recommended in the model proposed will inevitably come to pass on a wide scale in the foreseeable future. The model will be labeled utopian by so-called commonsense realists and inappropriate by ideologues of varied stripe; most notably today, proponents of educational neo-fundamentalism and human engineering.[29]

Still, if despite the current clamor for efficiency and functionality at all costs, teaching in its essence, **is**, in fact, an important art form--as I have insisted it is--then teacher educators interested in preparing creative artists of the classroom do need to rethink their mission and give authoritative and persuasive voice to their conclusions, difficult though that may be in the face of the resistance they will face for having done so.

Indeed, if enough of us who prepare teachers dare to envision **ourselves** as vitally creative thinkers and doers in our own right, perhaps we can begin to chisel a significant breach in the seemingly impervious wall of ideological utilitarianism and accountability which buffers American society from the plain truth--that teachers, indeed, are and forever can be "only artists."

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[1]One need only compare the present effort with a formal theoretical analysis of teacher preparation by the author published thirteen years ago. That was an attempt to develop a "scientifically supportable" model of "occupational socialization" utilizing recent social psychological research on the teacher's role. See Sanford W. Reitman, "An Alternative Field Work Model for Prospective Teachers," Interchange 4 (Nos. 2-3, 1973): 61-78.

[2] Victor N. Kobayashi, "Teaching as an Act of Grace: Zen and Education in the Traditional Arts of Japan." A paper presented at a conference of the American Educational Studies Association, San Francisco, November, 1984.

[3]In simplified terms, they must look to themselves and the community building process, instead of to the school for social salvation. See Sanford W. Reitman, "Daring to Make Teaching an Art," The Educational Forum 50 (Winter 1986): 137-48.

[4]Ibid., p. 137.

[5]Victor E. Frankl, "Psychotherapy, Art, and Religion," in Psychotherapy and Existentialism: Selected Papers on Logotherapy (New York: Washington Square Press, 1985), pp. 159-73.

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[17]To name a few: Martin Buber, I and Thou, 2nd ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958): Kenneth E. Eble, A Perfect Education (New York: Macmillan, 1966); William James, Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1983); Louis J. Rubin, Artistry in Teaching (New York: Random House, 1985); and Harold Rugg, Imagination, ed. comments by Kenneth D. Benne (New York: Harper and Row, 1963).

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[19]See especially Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality,2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1970.

[20]Frankl, Psychotherapy and Existentialism.

[21]Reitman, "An Alternative Field Work Model."

[22]Rubin, Artistry, pp. 160, 61.

[23]Defined as "a systematic outlook that benefits from knowledge of previously developed philosophies but is not an eclectic compromise amongst them." See Morris L. Bigge, Educational Philosophies for Teachers (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1982), p. 3.

[24]In the above regard, see N. L. Gage, "What Do We Know about Teaching Effectiveness?" Phi Delta Kappan 65 (October 1984): 87-93.

[25]Dawe, "Teaching: A Performing Art," p. 549, 50.

[26]Rubin, Artistry. P. 19.

[27]Frankl, "Existential Dynamics and Neurotic Escapism," in Psychotherapy and Existentialism, p. 37.

[28]Reitman, "Daring to Make Teaching an Art."

[29]For further discussion of these and several other influential educational ideologies prevailing in contemporary American society, see Sanford W. Reitman, Education, Society, and Change (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1981), pp. 289-317.